



Yavapai Republican Men's Forum

Remarks by Governor Jan Brewer

Prescott

Monday, July 13, 2009

Thank you very much, Barry.

I understand that in this very room -- and at this very same podium -- Barry Goldwater announced his intention to run for the presidency.

And -- this is the same podium used by John McCain to announce HIS presidential run on the steps of the Prescott Courthouse.

I hate to break with tradition, but -- the only thing I am announcing today -- is how delighted I am to be with you -- to share some thoughts about where Arizona has been, where we are going -- and HOW we are going to get there.

To start off, I want you all to know that I am standing here today, largely, because of the hard work that you and other Republicans always provided throughout my career to help me,... and I cannot say thank you enough.

It has always been clear to me throughout my 27 years in political office that the real backbone of this Party is the people behind the scenes. As someone who has been an elected precinct committeewoman for over 35 years, I know the impact of PC's and Republican Club members.

They are the people who put in the long hours, the people who work for free, stuffing envelopes and going door to door. The people willing to spend their weekends in the heat collecting signatures because they believe in a cause bigger than themselves.

As Arizona's Governor, I want you all to know I will work very hard and do the best job I know how to do to solve the many problems we currently face. Speaking of hard working officials, let me also take a moment to recognize Yavapai County Supervisors Carol Springer and Tom Thurman -- as well as Prescott Valley Mayor Harvey Scoog -- and Chino Valley Mayor Jim Bunker.

Each of these officials should be thanked for their talented dedication to Yavapai County and their solid public service on behalf of all Arizonans.

Thanks so much for the job you folks are doing, and thank you for being here today.

I'd be remiss if I didn't also formally introduce one of the many great people that have joined my team and that is Joanne Keene, my Director of the Northern Arizona office.

Joanne has much experience and follows closely what is happening in the Prescott -- Prescott Valley -- and Chino Valley areas. I hope you will agree that naming Joanne Keene was a darn good move.

Whenever I travel up here to Prescott, I am always grateful to hear the Northern Arizona perspective. In part, that's because YOU understand that Arizona needs to focus on long-term needs and resources.

And as Republicans, I hope everyone here also knows that the current fiscal problems we are facing at the state level were NOT created by Republicans.

Regardless of what squabbles and infighting we Republicans may have endured through during these past few months, it is absolutely critical to not let Democrats off the hook for their poor financial decisions that ultimately put us in this mess in the first place.

Too often, it seems people have forgotten that upon taking office in 2003, Governor Napolitano inherited an overall general fund budget of about \$6 billion dollars. Today, just 6 years later,...the budget has ballooned to over \$10 billion dollars in spending.

Not so long ago, we had hundreds of millions of dollars saved away in the State's rainy day fund that were completely spent down by Napolitano on new government programs -- and at that point (2006 if I remember) it certainly wasn't raining!

After six years of Governor Napolitano's leadership, the State of Arizona finds itself weighed down with obligation -- major overdue obligation. And the economic conditions around the country have only added to these problems.

So as we Republicans struggle to find an equitable way to clean up the economic mess left by Governor Napolitano, it is my hope, that we Republicans seize on this moment -- this opportunity in Arizona history to not just generate solutions that will simply patch the problems - but ultimately reach solutions that will actually solve our difficult long-term problems. Otherwise, we all fail as Republicans.

The economic challenges that Arizona faces are not small; but the Republican Legislature and I aren't afraid of the hard work, in fact, we embrace the challenges that lie ahead of us and will do everything we can to make Arizona a better place.

The important thing is that we, as Republicans, re-energize ourselves for the clear battles that await us. Now is the time to evaluate where we can improve on our shortcomings, and determine as a Party, how best to position ourselves as we move forward.

Another thing that seems to get lost in the press lately, are the many accomplishments that the Republican led Legislature and I have made that don't get attention they probably deserve.

Together, the Legislature and I cut government spending by more than at any time in Arizona history. The fact is, Republicans made state government smaller. Republicans got HB 2001 passed and signed into law. That legislation allows parents of disabled and foster children to continue to choose and utilize the school that best serves the needs of their children. And we accomplished this in a budget neutral way.

In March, I formally urged the Secretary of Defense to put up to 400 National Guardsmen on our border to help law enforcement do their part. That's because we Republicans have not lost our focus on Protecting our Borders.

As your Republican Governor, I was pleased to sign an executive order to reaffirm the State of Arizona's longstanding prohibition against mandatory union activity as a condition of employment in Arizona, we still have a Right to Work!

The values of our Republican party mirror the values of millions of Arizona families here in Arizona. Every goodfamily has its clashes, but families find a way to get along.

We are headed toward the same GOAL LINE when it comes to pushing government out of the way -- and allowing our free market system to work its magic -- creating jobs -- retaining jobs -- fueling our vital economic engine. When I became Governor, I offered a 5-point plan that included

- Structural budget reform
- Improving Proposition 105
- Spending cuts
- Targeted Tax cuts, and as a last resort
- A temporary tax increase

I did not make this decision without much consulting from some of the best economic forecasters in the land. But my 5 point plan, (ALL OF THESE 5

POINTS!!!) are a true strategy that if properly implemented can turn Arizona's economy around.

So, now after weeks and months of negotiations – times that included a Supreme Court hearing – my line-item vetoes – and a Special Session -- last week, I was pleased to sign into law four bills that will fund my top priorities -- including education -- public safety -- and health care for the state's frailest among us.

At long last, Republicans and Democrats united to fulfill my number-one priority -- preventing Education from being decimated by massive cuts.

And these bills, also allow Arizona to proceed with my application for federal stimulus funds, both for education and for AHCCCS.

But, that only solves HALF the problem.

The Legislature still needs to work with me on a solution on the revenue side, because the budget is still massively out of balance.

And every day that goes by is dangerous delay.

I remain eager to work with both sides to design a balanced budget with more spending cuts, and a revenue solution that bridges the immediate gap wisely – prudently -- and without delay.

The previous administration also – too often – overlooked the importance of continuing to take care of Arizona companies already here, so that they stay and keep jobs in our state.

More than 90 percent of Arizona's businesses are classified as small – these are a critical economic engine for Arizona.

Given this fact, that is why my first act as Governor included issuing a directive freezing all new agency regulations and rulemaking.

I have always believed that one of the best ways to stimulate the Arizona economy, is for big government to step aside, and let you, the creators of jobs and wealth, do what you do best – energize the market place.

This is hardly the time for new and burdensome regulations that only serve to strangle businesses and add needless costs and frustrations to people who are simply trying to make an honest living.

So in conclusion, let me say that I've had a busy first 6 months in office as your Republican Governor, to be sure.

But my fellow Republicans, I remain confident that together we can quickly place a plan into action and not halt when we run into resistance. This is the key to success and this is the key to moving Arizona forward.

We cannot afford to wait any longer. Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "History does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid."

We cannot be weak or timid, but we must go forward. We cannot govern and expect to remain in control as Republicans if we do not put everything on the table. I ask each one of you: help me and help your legislators to help Arizona.

Thanks to the Yavapai Republican Men's Forum for inviting me here today, and thank all of you

Thank you very much.